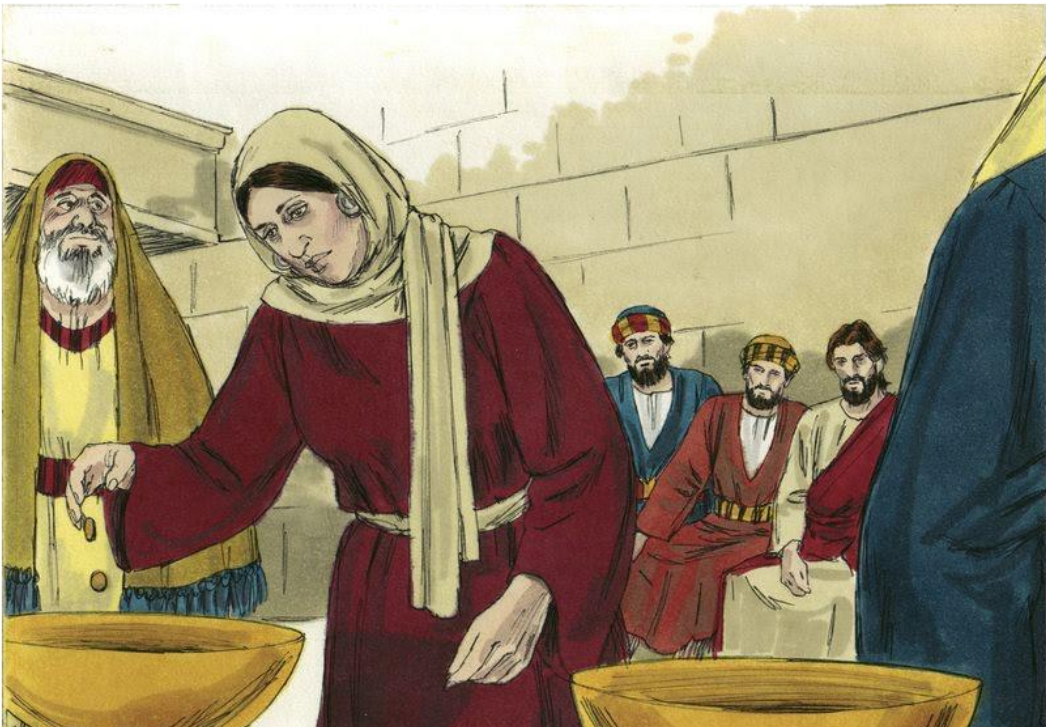


First Congregational United Church of Christ

*Empowered by the Holy Spirit and with the help of God,
we open our doors and hearts to all, in service and love as modeled by Jesus Christ.*



*Twenty-Fifth Sunday after Pentecost
Thirty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time*

*The Lord's Day
Twenty-Fifth Sunday after Pentecost
Thirty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time
Nine o'clock in the Morning*

The Worship of God

Worship is the submission of all our nature to God. It is the quickening of the conscience by God's holiness; the nourishment of the mind with God's truth; the purifying of the imagination by God's beauty; the opening of the heart to God's love; the surrender of the will to God's purpose—all of this gathered up in adoration.

~William Temple

The Prologue

In the lectionary texts chosen for worship today, an emphasis focusing on the vulnerability of widows takes center stage in two of the lections. In the Witness from the Hebrew Bible, we find a portion of the beautiful love story comprising the book of Ruth, a novella that comes as close to a romance novel as there is in the Bible. Underlying the drama that unfolds in the creative plotline of the story, the fragile dynamics associated with widows and orphans back in the day is fully revealed, clearly on display. In the Witness from the Gospels in Mark we read the story of what is traditionally called “the widow’s mite”, a story describing an impoverished woman who puts her last two coins, worth about a penny, into the temple treasury. She gave all the money she had! Once again, there is more to the story than the obvious.

Gathering Music

The Call to Worship and Welcome

The Spirit of the still speaking God be with you.

And also with you!

The Music for Contemplation

The Lighting of the Altar Candles

The Gathering

Enter into this sacred house of praise, worshipping in a sanctuary not made with human hands but built by the labor of the very Holy Spirit of God!

We gather in the presence of God, finding rest for our anxious souls, hospitality a divine heritage extended to daughters and sons of the Holy One!

Come and worship, giving glory to the One who lifts up the lowly and the impoverished, including those overflowing with abundance!

With profound gratitude, we give thanks to the One whose extravagant love is poured out on all persons everywhere in the ultimate gift of Christ Jesus!

Let us worship God!

The Choral Introit

What Does the Lord Require

Jim Strathdee

Choral Ensemble; Norma Yaeger, director

The Collect

Let us pray to the Lord,

God of the least and lowly, God of the widows and orphans of our time and of every persuasion, all who live out of their abundance, we have come together today to worship you in this home you have built, this holy sanctuary, a house not made with human hands; we have gathered in this sacred space out of our need to be fed this day, eagerly awaiting the presence of the One who fills us with good things and quenches our thirst for the presence of God; come near to us in this time of prayer and praise that we might be restored from the anxiety of the vain laboring of this life, filled with the happiness that only comes from your goodness and grace; all this we pray through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the holy and still speaking Spirit, one God, forever and ever.

Amen.

*The Opening Hymn, No. 517

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

BEECHER

*The Litany of Praise

Give praise to God, the One who continually labors to build this house of worship, a sacrificial gift of extravagant love!

The labor of building this sacred space is not made in vain, but a gracious gift of the Holy poured out on all people, a sanctuary giving rest to the weary!

God brings peace to all who labor! Holy is the One who guards the city, protecting the faithful from the darkness of evil that threatens to diminish our humanity!

For those who labor unto themselves, the toils of life are vain and empty! From our rising until our resting the Holy One keeps watch over the faithful!

The Lord saves those who eagerly await the presence of the Holy among all people everywhere, a call to feed the widows and orphans revealed in our midst!

God extends hospitality to the least and the lowly, the mercy of God graced to the poorest of the poor and to all those overflowing with abundance! Praise the Lord!

*Glory to the Creator, and to the Christ, and to the Comforter!
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
World without end! Amen! Amen!*

The Call to Confession¹

At our best, we long to be whole people whose words and deeds are a reflection of the truth within us. We want to be free of pretense and alive to the wonders that we encounter in all creation. God is ready to cleanse and heal us as we confess our sin. In the sacred silence and stillness of these moments, let us confess before the Holy.

The Silent Confession

The Corporate Confession²

Let us pray to the Lord,

Stewarding God, you know how much we enjoy being honored above others, and how we sometimes resent the special respect that others might receive. You are aware of the shortcuts we take for our own advantage. We need your help to put away all that is false and to discover our true identity as your children. Lift us up in your forgiving love, we pray.

The Assurance of Pardon³

Beloved faith community, hear the good news! Those who truly repent of the lies they have lived are welcomed as brothers and sisters by Christ Jesus. The authentic, self-giving spirit of one who was fully human is ours to embrace. The witness of a life lived for the common good inspires us to rise up to be the best we can be. We are forgiven, freed from the burden of all that limits our capacity to be human.

Thanks be to God!

The Time for the Children

Tobi Johannsen

The Witness from the Epistles

HEBREWS 9:24-28

For Christ did not enter a sanctuary made by human hands, a mere copy of the true one, but he entered into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf. Nor was it to offer himself again and again, as the high priest enters the holy place year after year with blood that is not his own, for then he would have had to suffer again and again since the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to remove sin by the sacrifice of himself. And just as it is appointed for mortals to die once and after that the judgment, so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.

Listen to what the Spirit of the still speaking God is saying!

Thanks be to God!

The Response, PSALM 127

RESIGNATION

*Except the house is built by God, its stones for naught are laid!
The city, without God's defense, is feeble and afraid!
To eat the bread of anxious toil makes all our labor vain!
God feeds our cherished souls with rest to face our work again!*

*In every age, the greatest gifts God's fullness can accord
are generations born to claim the blessings of the Lord!
The ancient die, the young grow old! They, too, shall fade away!
Creation, as God's heritage, begins with each new day!*

The Witness from the Gospels

MARK 12:38-44

As he taught, he said, "Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes and to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces and to have the best seats in the synagogues and places of honor at banquets! They devour widows' houses and for the sake of appearance say long prayers. They will receive the greater condemnation!" He sat down opposite the treasury and watched the crowd putting money into the treasury. Many rich people put in large sums. A poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which are worth a penny. Then he called his disciples and said to them, "Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the treasury. For all of them have contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on."

The Gospel for today!

Thanks be to God!

The Sermon

Widows Are Us!

Timothy W. Shirley

The Music for Meditation

God Who Stretched the Spangled Heavens arr. Albert Zabel
Chime Choir; Susan Krivichi, director

The Service of Holy Communion

*Individually wrapped gluten-free bread is
available in the center bowl of each bread plate.*

The Concerns of the Church

A Stewardship Moment

Kristen Anchor

The Pastoral Prayer

The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come! Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread and
forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever! Amen.**

The Receiving of Our Gifts

The Offertory

*The Doxology

OLD HUNDREDTH

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow!
Praise Christ all creatures here below!
Praise Holy Spirit, evermore!
Praise triune God whom we adore!*

*The Prayer of Thanksgiving

*The Closing Hymn, No. 714 *For the Fruit of All Creation* AR HYD Y NOS

*The Extinguishing of the Altar Candles

*The Procession of the Light

*The Benediction and Blessing

To our guests! At your choosing, we invite you to join us in a long-standing tradition at First Congregational United Church of Christ as we form a circle, joining hands and singing together our Fellowship Song.

*The Fellowship Song *Let There Be Peace on Earth* WORLD PEACE

Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me.

With every step I take, let this be my joyous creed.

To take each moment and live each moment in peace, eternally!

Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me.

The Music for Reflection

*You are invited to stand as you are able.

Lector: Mark Johannsen

Ushers: Mary Lou Congdon and Mike Mettler

The color for the Season after Pentecost is Green, symbolizing the growth and development of the Church.

Various symbols of the Trinity, such as the Trefoil and Triangle designs used in our sanctuary, remind us of the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost and the Triune nature of God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; Parent, Child, Advocate and Comforter; Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer.

Ordinary Time refers to that part of the Church Year that does not fall within one of the major seasons and does not observe any specific aspect of the Mystery of Christ. It consists of thirty-four Sundays in the liturgical year counted backwards from the Reign of Christ and emphasizes personal faith development and nurture, and the growth and enhancement of the Church and the churches.

The flowers adorning the Chancel for worship today are given by Tobi and Mark Johannsen, giving thanks for all the wonderful blessings God gives us.

Worship Notes:

¹⁻³ Reprinted by permission United Church Press from *Led by Love: Worship Resources for Year B*, by Lavon Bayler. Copyright 1996 by United Church Press.

Today's scripture lessons are from the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible, Updated Edition.

All music and text is reprinted through permission of either copyright licenses:

OneLicense Annual Reprint License: A-738560; expires March 20, 2025.

CCLI Copyright License 1562668; expires October 31, 2025.

CHURCH COUNCIL

President, Carol Marshall

Eric Olsen, Vice President

Kristen Anchor

Steve Burrill

Tom Helmick

Mark Holperin

Bill Marshall

MINISTRY CHAIRPERSONS

Pastor Parish Relations, Tobi Johannsen

Women's Fellowship, Sharon Breit

Sanctuary Arts Group, Patti Roberts

Facilities, Donna Adams

Finance, Paula Hendrickson

Gifts and Endowments, Bill Marshall

Safety and Security, Carlton Schroeder

Scholarship, Ursula Charaf

Service Support Team, Joy Turpin

Corresponding Secretary, Kelli Burrill

CHURCH STAFF

Timothy W. Shirley, Pastor - Debbie Brown, Church Administrator

Sharon Breit, Director of Christian Education - Lori Lee Hunter, Director of Music

Linda Brainard, Pianist - Norma Yaeger, Pianist

Christine Clough, Cleaning Service

First Congregational United Church of Christ

105 North First Street ~ PO Box 1385 ~ Eagle River, Wisconsin 54521

Website: eagleriverucc.org Church Office: 715-802-8501 E-mail: office@eagleriverucc.org

Timothy W. Shirley: timwshirley@gmail.com



First Congregational UCC - Eagle River, WI

November 10, 2024

Το διαεπτο της χηρας

